

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Policy and Resources Committee - 13 February 2012

REPORT ON: Dundee City Council's Single Equality Scheme - Annual Report 2010-2011

REPORT BY: Director, Leisure and Communities

REPORT NO: 61-2012

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report informs the Committee of the progress in implementing City Council's Single Equality Scheme (SES) Action Plan 2009-2012 and meets the Council's statutory duty to report annually on progress in meeting its equality duties.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee is asked to:

2.1 note the contents of this report.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Equalities actions can be contained within existing departmental budgets.

4.0 INTRODUCTION

4.1 Reference is made to Agenda item III of the Policy and Resources Committee of 23 November 2009 where the draft first Single Equality Scheme was approved for consultation.

4.2 Equality and Diversity is taken forward within the City Council by the Equality and Diversity Core Group. The Core group is also tasked with producing an annual report on the Council's progress in delivering the Single Equality Scheme.

4.3 This annual report informs the Committee of the progress in implementing the objectives set out in the Single Equality Scheme (SES) Action Plan in the second year (2010- 2011) of the 3 year scheme.

4.4 The Education Department will present a separate report on its progress in implementing its equality objectives to the Education Committee on the 27 February 2012.

5.0 BACKGROUND

5.1 April 2010 saw the introduction of the Equality Act 2010 (the Act). The Act brought together 116 pieces of equality legislation into a single Act. The Act aimed to make the law easier to understand and implement by simplifying for individuals, public authorities and private organisations.

5.2 The Act introduced a new public sector equality duty which requires public authorities to pay due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination; advance equality; and foster good relations across a range of protected characteristics. These three requirements apply across the 'protected characteristics' of age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex and sexual orientation.

Only the requirement to eliminate discrimination etc. applies to the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership. The new duty replaces the three previous duties relating to race, disability and gender equality.

6.0 SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME

6.1 Equality impact assessments - all relevant new or reviewed policies will be equality impact assessed:

- In 2010 over two hundred Council staff were been trained in using the Rapid Impact Assessment Tool (RIAT).
- 176 completed RIAT's have been published on the Dundee City Council web site since September 2010.
- Two examples policies and accompanying RIAT's were reviewed by the Equality Champions Implementation Group to inform practice.
- New Council guidance on undertaking a Full Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA) was approved by the Strategic Management Team in December 2011.

6.2 Research and data - improved access to and use of published national and local research, guidance, local knowledge and community input in the development and delivery of policy and practice.

- Dundee City Council web page is regularly updated with equalities research and guidance to support Council staff in the delivery of equality good practice.
- Engaging protected communities in developing guidance on how to use research to inform practice is unlikely to be achieved in the foreseeable future due to difficulties in engaging some communities and the need to priorities resources in other areas.

6.3 Service monitoring - improved use of service user equality monitoring data to inform policy and practice.

- A time-limited working group of the Equality and Diversity Core Group was established to develop Corporate guidance on service monitoring, utilising whenever possible existing service monitoring systems and practices. A report was submitted to the Management Team (Operational Issues) on taking forward equality monitoring in June 2011. This is now being progressed internally.

6.4 DCC as a major employer will take steps to ensure that its workforce reflects the diversity of the citizens of Dundee.

- Annual employment equality monitoring data was submitted to the Policy and Resources Committee of June and has been published on the Council's internet site.
- Payroll and Personnel System will be amended to comply with national equality information guidance. Thereafter employees to complete a questionnaire to update their equality details. It is hoped that this should be achieved by end of June 2012.
- Gender Equality. A time-limited working group of the Equality and Diversity Core Group will submit a report to the Strategic Management Team by February 2012 on proposals to support women in accessing senior management roles.
- A consultation exercise is currently being undertaken with equality groups to identify barriers preventing protected communities applying for Council vacancies.

6.5 Training and awareness of equality legislation, barriers faced by protected characteristic communities, sources of help and advice.

- E learning equality training program for council staff induction has been developed and is hoped to be rolled out in early 2012.
- Elected members Equality and Diversity awareness training sessions have been agreed and will be offered to all elected members in June 2012.

6.6 Language and communication - DCC will provide accessible communication systems and services to meet the needs of Dundee's citizens.

- Accessible communication guidance on is now available on the Councils web site, however mainstreaming effective and inclusive communication practice across all Councils activities still remains a major challenge. A report to the Strategic Management Team in August 2011, 'Operating Model Redesign-Contact Centres' identified the complexity associated with developing a corporate approach to Customer Contacts. The report recommended that a Customer Service Forum be set up to develop a corporate 'Customer Charter' outlining standards for dealing with customers, consider a consistent approach for training staff, share best practice, consider areas of joint working and support etc. Building accessible communication practice within the design and delivery of the proposed Customer Charter provides an ideal vehicle to mainstream and sustain effective communication for all Dundee's Citizens.

6.7 Accessible venues - DCC will make reasonable adjustments to ensure all public events and training venues are accessible to all.

- DCC has commissioned DisabledGo to undertake a comprehensive survey of 1,000 venues in Dundee. The on-line Access Guide for Dundee will be launched on the 28th of February 2012.
- Dundee City Council Accessible Event Guidance is now published on the DCC Equality and Diversity Web pages.

6.8 Procurement - DCC will meet its statutory equalities duties on procurement.

- The Scottish Government does not now plan to include specific duties relating to procurement when the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 eventually come into force.

6.9 Partner agencies - DCC will support its partner agencies in meeting equalities duties.

The Dundee Partnership Equalities and Diversity Group has decided to champion 3 topics over the next few years.

- Community Engagement
- Training
- Monitoring

Community Engagement is being taken forward first chaired by Dundee City Council.

Key community engagement actions have been agreed by the partner agencies:

- i) co-ordination of knowledge/information to better inform equalities work across partner agencies.
- ii) utilise existing partner equality networks and jointly undertake community equality consultation.

- iii) implement effective interface with the voluntary sector .
- iv) identify equality engagement gaps within the community planning process and work towards filling them.

6.10 Grant funding - applicants for grant funding will be required to evidence equality and diversity good practice in their grant application.

- New Equality & Diversity Grant application guidance is now available on the DCC Web site. The guidance requires applicants to evidence how proposed outcomes will reduce inequality and promote equality of opportunity.

6.11 Hate crimes are reduced through improved recording and community responses.

- Dundee Community Safety Partnership has established a Dundee Hate Incident Multi Agency Partnership (HIMAP). Reporting to the Community Safety Partnership, HIMAP is tasked with co-ordinating agency and community responses to hate crimes and reporting on these.

6.12 Pay and grading - DCC's pay and grading structure is fair and non discriminatory.

- This is currently being progressed. It is hoped to have information ready later this year to report to Committee.

6.13 Involving communities in supporting DCC delivery of its Single Equality Scheme.

- Three Equality Action Groups have been established for Disability & Age, Gender & Sexual Orientation and Race Ethnicity Religion and Belief. Each group is supported by a council officer chair and vice chair. Membership of group is open to any organisation or individual active in the relevant equality area. The individual groups have met quarterly since March 2010. The minutes of each group are available on the DCC Equality Web page. In preparation for establishing the Equality Action Group all chair and vice chairs attended a one day training program by the Scottish Community Development Centre in the National Standards for Community Engagement.

6.14 Promote good relations between and across communities.

- A number of cross community events have been supported by Dundee City Council via Equality and Diversity Grant Funding. For example: The Muslim Women's Resource Centre to host a national conference in the city: LGBT Youth Scotland funded to secure a young Dundee persons membership of the LGBT Youth National Forum: A national arts event in Dundee celebrating LGBT History Month: Funding BSL interpreters to local Deaf walking group: Funding Deaf Link's development and delivery of Deaf Awareness Training Program: Dundee Women's Festival: Scottish Dance Theatre Symposium, encouraging young disabled to enter the performing arts as a career: Blind/Deaf Communicator to support a blind and deaf resident participation in Kirkton Community Planning Project.

6.15 Awareness - citizens, elected members, staff and partners have a greater awareness of equality and diversity activities in the city.

- The Equality and Diversity Co-ordinator publishes a quarterly news letter promoting the good Equality and Diversity good practice from across the Council.

7.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, and Risk Management.

7.2 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and will be available on the Council Web Site <http://www.dundee.gov.uk/equanddiv/equimpact/>

8.0 CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services) and Director of Finance have been consulted on this report and are in agreement with its contents.

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Equality Impact Assessment.

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1 February 2012